



Regular Meeting Minutes
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, January 21, 2004
City Hall Kiva Forum
3939 Drinkwater Boulevard

Present: Chairperson Leigh Hersey, Vice-chair Donn Loper, Commissioners Shelley Anderson, Dean Cerimeli, Bill Heckman, Nona Oliver, and Stephen Owens

Staff Present: Christy Hill, Steve Lehmann, Erin McKallor-Quill, Bill Murphy, Doug Nesselroad, Judy Weiss, and Rose Williams

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Hersey called the meeting to order at 5 p.m.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Chairperson Hersey asked everyone to observe a moment of silence.

Chairperson Hersey introduced the Commission's newest member, Dean Cerimeli. Commissioner Cerimeli provided background information.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Vice-chair Loper moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 7, 2004 as corrected.

Commissioner Heckman seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT OF CURRENT EVENTS (A.R.S. § 38-431.02(K))

Judy Weiss and Bill Murphy, Managers in Parks, Recreation & Facilities, updated the Commission on the status of events and activities of the Parks, Recreation, & Facilities Division. Mr. Murphy noted the Downtown and Old Town areas have received new benches and planters have been refurbished. New plantings have been done in the Mall and Downtown areas. Staff is preparing for the Parada on January 31, 2004. City staff assisted with the cleanup after the New Year's Eve Party. Both the Stadium and Indian School Park are making preparations for the upcoming Fantasy Camp and Spring Training. Ms. Weiss noted that in the Commission packets this evening is a new address list, a calendar of meetings, and 2 maps of park sites that may be useful. The next meeting is February 4, 2004 at Mountain View Park. Staff is planning a Commission Tour on March 10, 2004. Sports Illustrated announced on their Website today that Scottsdale has been designated as Arizona's only "Sportstown USA", an award associated with their 50th Anniversary. An interesting fact for the Commission to know is that since its opening in April of 2002, Pinnacle Peak Park has hosted 258,620 visitors.

ROTARY CLUB OF SCOTTSDALE PARK ENHANCEMENT PRESENTATION /CITY RECOGNITION OF CONTRIBUTIONS

Christy Hill and Erin Quill, Recreation Coordinators, introduced Gloria Swayzee, Executive Director, and Craig Miller, Vice President, and Jason Brock, President-elect, of the Rotary Club of Scottsdale. Mr. Brock presented a brief history of the Rotary Club in Scottsdale, which will be 50 years old, this February. The Rotary Club has made contributions valued at \$500,000 to the City of Scottsdale's Rotary Park in Gainey Ranch since its inception. Park enhancements to date as well as potential future park projects were highlighted. Ms. Hill and Ms. McKallor-Quill recognized and thanked the Scottsdale Rotary Club and its members for their hard work and efforts.

Commissioner Anderson wanted to express her personal thanks as a citizen and a commissioner for the support the Rotary Club has provided.

Commissioner Heckman said he knows how passionate the group is about the site. He asked Mr. Brock to expand on what future improvements the group is considering. Mr. Brock said many ideas have been brought forward but there are no specific plans at the current time. The club will try to get ideas from the community and find out just what the desire is. One idea expressed was a rose garden.

UPDATE ON YOUTH SPORTS FIELD MAINTENANCE

Bill Murphy, Manager, updated the Commission on the history of the Sports Field Maintenance Program at school sites that the City is maintaining as a part of the intergovernmental agreement with the Scottsdale Unified School District. Mr. Murphy gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining the work that has currently been completed, work planned for the near future, and the associated costs.

Chairperson Hersey called for public testimony.

Shane Richardson, representing Old Scottsdale Youth Baseball who plays at Pima, wanted to express support for the plan and give a perspective and update as an end user. He is not concerned with how the Task Force decides to pay for this program, as he trusts them to be diligent to fund the program again. His group wants the plan to stay in affect. The Pima School field was in really bad shape. After this plan passed the City aerated and fertilized the field. That had never been done before and the effect was immediate. Through the IGA the school person responsible for the irrigation was instructed to be more effective with the irrigation schedule. The City has laser leveled the infield. By October the fields looked fantastic and the parent response has been fantastic. The kids deserve opportunity to have this type of system in place continually.

Larry Heath, 8601 E. Gail Rd. Scottsdale, participated on Youth Sports Task Force. The older fields were in horrible condition as they were so heavily used. In older parks the improvement of fields is critical. He stated he was delighted to learn that the selected fields have improved. He feels the fields need to be visited more frequently. He is disappointed not everyone is being served and feels there are still some fields that need help. The continuation of funds needs to be found. There is a tax increase measure on the ballot and if it passes it may free up some money to be redirected to the Parks Department. He asked staff to look at the e-mail distribution list and update it to insure that all leagues are included when the Task Force is reconvened.

Chairperson Hersey closed public testimony.

Vice-chair Loper asked if there are any plans to do any more fields. Mr. Murphy said the IGA was specific about which fields would be maintained. Vice-chair Loper asked if there is any that we might be doing with the remaining amount of money that was allocated to the program. Mr. Murphy noted the intent is to do maintenance over spring break and again when school concludes. Staff anticipates that the remaining funds will be spent. Vice-chair Loper noted the fields at Laguna School were skinned and asked if there are any plans to install grass. Mr. Murphy said that option was discussed. Staff has concerns about

putting down grass at this time of year and asked the leagues to play this season on the skinned surface. Meanwhile staff is working with School District to resolve that issue with watering and grass if they can commit to proper year round maintenance for these fields. Vice-chair Loper asked if funding would come from the School District or from the Partnership Fund. Mr. Murphy said it would come from the fund. Vice-chair Loper asked if there is any effect from irrigation on any of the pitchers mounds or home plate areas and would the dirt and surface wash away. Mr. Murphy said there is no harm done by irrigation. Vice-chair Loper asked about the possibility of the funding being channeled to the School District so they can take over the maintenance. Ms. Weiss said, with regard to the upcoming ballot on the sales tax increase, funds would be allotted to the McDowell Sonoran Preserve and Public Safety. Details beyond that are not known. It's possible that the public safety portion of those funds could possibly result in additional staff that could be allocated to a Park Police Unit. However, that level of detail is unknown at this point.

Commissioner Cerimeli asked what was the projected date to reconvene the Task Force. Mr. Murphy said the goal is sometime in March. Commissioner Cermieli asked if there is a list of members. Ms. Weiss said the distribution list has been updated and she has been in contact with the Little League. Several people have expressed an interest in serving on the Task Force. Anyone interested is welcome to attend.

Commissioner Heckman noted only \$38,000 has been billed; do we project offsetting the money spent. Ms. Weiss noted that is a to date figure. The big group that has not been billed yet is the Little League. Staff anticipates this will be a breakeven situation. Commissioner Heckman recalls the Little League projected about \$40,000 over and above what they already do and that would only total \$78,000 billed. Ms. Weiss said there are other groups that are just beginning their seasons and have not been billed and staff feels the Little League projection is a little conservative. Commissioner Heckman asked if there is any way of holding funds in case expenses exceed revenues. Ms. Weiss said this year would help tell us what the options are for the future. Those could include anything from lowering or deleting the fee, adding sites, and other options. The Partnership Funds paid this year. The funds we are collecting are for next year. The City Council may choose to fund this program from the General Fund. All options will be laid out for the Task Force. Commissioner Heckman said the reality is simple - schools do not have the money, Parks and Recreation doesn't have the money, the City doesn't have the money and has the added burden to support an archaic police department and now to fund a fire department. He doesn't want this program to fall on the backs of the parents of the youth participating. He noted the vast majority of the maintenance appears to be for the benefit of baseball programs, not swimming, soccer, dive teams, and other youth groups. He encourages staff to get a full representation on the Task Force. He asked if those members were informed of this meeting. Ms. Weiss said they were with 1 exception as a result of a change in officers that staff did not know about. Many groups are just starting up their season and have board meetings and practices to attend. Commissioner Heckman said there is a compelling need and he sees the writing on the wall on how budgets are crafted. We have to work hard to hold onto what we have. The need is huge and this addresses the playing field need. He commends the Task Force and is sympathetic with the plight of the Little League as to the burden. A longer-term solution is really what we need to find.

Commissioner Anderson noted that someone had mentioned at a previous meeting they received one card about meetings and never received another. Could staff continue to send cards to everyone even if they don't participate. Ms. Weiss said staff is communicating through e-mail with minutes and notices being sent to the entire distribution list. More than one meeting will be needed to gather input. Everyone on the list with no exception has the ability to attend and have input.

Commissioner Owens noted if the Task Force does not reconvene until March and the budget is acted on by the City Council in June that does not give the Commission much time to review the recommendations. Is it possible to move the first meeting date of that Task Force up or schedule more frequent meetings, as this will continue to be a contentious issue. Ms. Weiss noted the 04-05 budget has already been completed from a staff level. The fees being collected will pay for the program in 04-05. It is a balancing act to try to get everyone together for the meetings. This was always intended to be a multi-year project.

Staff would like to wait until the Little League gets under way so they can see what has been done at the sites and develop evaluations and opinions. Staff would also like to get most of the fees collected in order to get a better idea of the costs vs. revenue. Commissioner Owens asked when would the City Council make a decision on whether or not to continue the program. Ms. Weiss said the promise was to come back to the Council after a year of implementation. When the Council gives their direction, the money will be in the fund from the current season. The \$106,000 was approved by the City Council from the Partnership Fund. Fees currently being collected are being held in a special account.

Commissioner Heckman thought we were creating funds that don't exist and asked if the original intent was to repay the Partnership Fund account or are those funds permanently pulled out of that account. Ms. Weiss noted that \$70,000 is budgeted to replenish the Partnership Fund for next year.

OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC (A.R.S. § 38-431.02)

Chairperson Hersey called for any items from the floor or from the Commission. There were none.

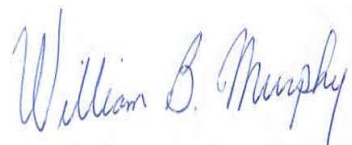
ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Anderson moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Heckman seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

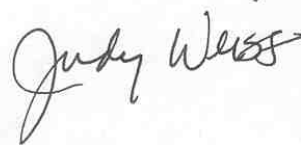
With no further business to be brought before the Commission, Chairperson Hersey adjourned the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Ruth Johnson, Recording Secretary.

Meets established criteria.



William Murphy
Service Manager



Judy Weiss
Manager